

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please amend Claims 1, 20, 22, 23 and 33 as follows.

1. (Currently Amended) An image display apparatus comprising an image signal generating unit for generating an image signal and an image display element for displaying an image on a screen according to the image signal inputted from said image signal generating unit,

wherein when the screen is divided into a portion in which the image is to be displayed and a dark display portion in which no image is to be displayed, non-dark display is performed in the dark display portion for a predetermined time period from a start time of display control until a start time of a process for terminating the display control, and the predetermined time period is set such that, even when the non-dark display is performed for a time period ~~not longer than~~ the predetermined time period, ~~visual interference seen the non-dark display cannot be recognized~~ by a viewer ~~is suppressed~~.

2. (Previously Presented) An image display apparatus according to Claim 1, wherein said image display element includes a plurality of modulation target units that are two-dimensionally arranged.

3. (Previously Presented) An image display apparatus according to Claim 1, wherein said image display element performs binary display.

4. (Original) An image display apparatus according to Claim 3, wherein the non-dark display is an image reversal.

5. (Original) An image display apparatus according to Claim 1, wherein the non-dark display is performed a plurality of times from the start time of the display control to the start time of the process for terminating the display control.

6. (Original) An image display apparatus according to Claim 5, wherein the non-dark display is cyclically performed.

7. (Original) An image display apparatus according to Claim 5, wherein the non-dark display is performed each time several field periods have passed.

8. (Previously Presented) An image display apparatus according to Claim 1, wherein the image is displayed by sequentially irradiating said image display element with light in various colors and switching images in the colors displayed by said image display element in synchronization with the light irradiation, and
the non-dark display is performed in a display period assigned to a specific color.

9. (Previously Presented) An image display apparatus according to Claim 1, wherein said image display element performs binary display, and

the non-dark display is performed for a signal corresponding to a low gradation.

10. (Previously Presented) An image display apparatus according to Claim 1, wherein the non-dark display is cyclically performed at a frequency lower than a screen refresh frequency of said image display element.

11. (Original) An image display apparatus according to Claim 1, wherein the non-dark display is cyclically performed at a frequency of 50Hz or higher.

12. (Previously Presented) An image display apparatus according to Claim 1, wherein the image signal transmitted from said image signal generating unit to said image display element is a pulse-width-modulated signal, and

 said image display element is driven by the pulse-width-modulated signal and displays a gradation image.

13. (Original) An image display apparatus according to Claim 1, wherein a difference in aspect ratio between the image to be displayed and the screen causes the division of the screen into the portion in which the image is displayed and the portion in which no image is displayed.

14. (Original) An image display apparatus according to Claim 1, wherein the screen is divided into a plurality of sub-screen areas in each of which an image is displayed, and the portion in which no image is displayed.

15. (Previously Presented) An image display apparatus according to Claim 1, wherein said image display element is a spatial modulation element that uses a liquid crystal.

16. (Previously Presented) An image display apparatus according to Claim 1, wherein said image display element is a spatial modulation element of an MEMS type.

17. (Previously Presented) An image display apparatus according to Claim 1, wherein said image display element is a spatial modulation element in which micromirrors are arranged.

18. (Previously Presented) An image display apparatus according to Claim 1, wherein said image display element is an LED.

19. (Previously Presented) An image display apparatus according to Claim 1, wherein said image display element is a display element of a self light emitting type.

20. (Currently Amended) An image display apparatus comprising an image signal generating unit for generating an image signal and an image display element for displaying

an image on a screen according to the image signal inputted from said image signal generating unit,

wherein when the screen is divided into a portion in which gradation display is to be performed and a bright display portion in which the gradation display is not to be performed, bright display is continuously performed while dark display is performed for a predetermined time period in the bright display portion from a start time of display control until a start time of a process for terminating the display control, and the predetermined time period is set such that, even when the dark display is performed for ~~a time period not longer than~~ the predetermined time period, ~~visual interference seen~~ the dark display cannot be recognized by a viewer ~~is suppressed~~.

21. (Previously Presented) An image display apparatus according to Claim 20, wherein said image display element is an element of an MEMS type.

22. (Currently Amended) A method of driving an image display apparatus that displays an image by inputting an image signal generated by an image signal generating unit into an image display element, the driving method comprising:

 a step for displaying a multi-level gradation image in a predetermined area of a screen where a multi-level gradation image is to be displayed and performing dark display in another predetermined area of the screen where a multi-level gradation image is not to be displayed, and

 a step for performing non-dark display in the other predetermined area for a predetermined time period from a start time of display control to a start time of a process for

terminating the display control, and the predetermined time period is set such that, even when the non-dark display is performed for ~~a time period not longer than~~ the predetermined time period, ~~visual interference seen~~ the non-dark display cannot be recognized by a viewer ~~is suppressed~~.

23. (Currently Amended) An image display apparatus comprising an image signal generating unit for generating an image signal and an image display element for displaying images on a screen by performing bright display and dark display according to the image signal inputted from said image signal generating unit,

wherein when the screen is divided into an effective image area in which various images are to be displayed and a non-effective image area in which no effective image is to be displayed, dark display is continuously performed while bright display is performed for a predetermined time period in the non-effective image area, and the predetermined time period is set such that, even when the bright display is performed for ~~a time period not longer than~~ the predetermined time period, ~~visual interference seen~~ the bright display cannot be recognized by a viewer ~~is suppressed~~.

24. (Original) An image display apparatus according to Claim 23, wherein a total effective time of the bright display accounts for a proportion exceeding 0% but not exceeding 20% of an entire display period.

25. (Previously Presented) An image display apparatus according to Claim 23, wherein said image display element is a spatial modulation element of an MEMS type.

26. (Previously Presented) An image display apparatus according to Claim 23, wherein said image display element includes a micromirror for each pixel, said micromirror being disposed so as to selectively take one of a first position and a second position, and the dark display is performed when said micromirror takes the first position, and the bright display is performed when said micromirror takes the second position.

27. (Previously Presented) An image display apparatus according to Claim 23, further comprising a lighting device for emitting light toward said image display element, wherein said image display element has a narrow and long shape, and the images are displayed by scanning light reflected by said micromirror.

28. (Previously Presented) An image display apparatus according to Claim 23, wherein said image display element has a wide shape, and a lighting device emits light toward said image display element.

29. (Original) An image display apparatus according to Claim 23, wherein a difference in aspect ratio between the images to be displayed and the screen causes the division of the screen into the effective image area and the non-effective image area.

30. (Previously Presented) An image display apparatus according to Claim 23,

wherein the image signal transmitted from said image signal generating unit to said image display element is a pulse-width-modulated signal, and
said image display element is driven by the pulse-width-modulated signal and displays a gradation image.

31. (Original) An image display apparatus according to Claim 23, wherein a plurality of effective image areas are generated on the screen.

32. (Original) An image display apparatus according to Claim 23, wherein a display color and a gradation level in the non-effective image area are adjustable.

33. (Currently Amended) A method of driving an image display apparatus that displays images on a screen by performing bright display and dark display according to an image signal that is generated by an image signal generating unit and is inputted into an image display element, comprising the steps of:

dividing the screen into an effective image area in which various images are to be displayed and a non-effective image area in which no effective image is to be displayed; and

continuously performing dark display while performing bright display for a predetermined time period in the non-effective image area, and the predetermined time period is set such that, even when the bright display is performed for ~~a time period not longer than~~ the predetermined time period, ~~visual interference seen the bright display cannot be recognized by a viewer is suppressed.~~

34. (Original) A driving method according to Claim 33, wherein a total effective time of the bright display accounts for a proportion exceeding 0% but not exceeding 20% of an entire display period.

35. (Original) A driving method according to Claim 33, wherein the bright display is cyclically performed.

36. (Original) A driving method according to Claim 33, wherein the bright display is cyclically performed each time several field periods have passed.

37. (Original) A driving method according to Claim 33, wherein the bright display is cyclically performed at a frequency lower than a screen refresh frequency of the image display element.

38. (Original) A driving method according to Claim 33, wherein the bright display is cyclically performed at a frequency of 50Hz or higher.

39. (Original) A driving method according to Claim 33,
wherein the image signal transmitted from the image signal generating
unit to the image display element is a pulse-width-modulated signal, and
the image display element is driven by the pulse-width-modulated
signal and displays a gradation image.

40. (Original) A driving method according to Claim 33,
wherein full color display is performed by sequentially irradiating the
image display element with light in various colors and switching images in the colors displayed
by the image display element in synchronization with the light irradiation, and
the bright display is performed in a display period assigned to a specific
color.

41. (Original) A driving method according to Claim 40, wherein the
display period assigned to the specific color is a period during which blue display is performed.